Tui Motu

InterIslands

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. . . making cowards of us all

Contents

Making cowards of us all

We live in a world ruled by fear. Teachers, doctors, politicians, business people seem tormented by fear of litigation. Nothing pushes up the cost of essential services more than a perceived need to insure against being sued. It seems we have arrived at a point where we have to protect ourselves at every turn against real or imaginary bogeymen.

One of the pregnant issues of contemporary New Zealand is the soaring rate of imprisonment. The cost of locking up offenders for ever longer periods is rocketing to astronomical heights. Ironically, it is not under a right wing administration that the numbers have escalated but under Labour. It is a national disgrace.

Two leading articles explore this. Tom Cavanagh (*pp6-7*), coming from America to explore our pioneering efforts in restorative justice, is horrified to discover New Zealand plunging headlong down the same punitive path as his own country. And in an interview, Kim Workman (*pp8-9*) identifies what is deficient in our justice system – but also what is being done to promote rehabilitation of offenders.

Behind this punitive culture lies the haunting spectre of naked fear. We see a cockroach: we rush forward to crush it. We witness a crime: our primary instinct is to lash out, to seek revenge, to obliterate the cause.

It requires considerable maturity to stand back, swallow our resentments, assess the causes and seek some path to healing. Such is the restorative process.

By coincidence – or is it? – Joy Cowley, in a penetrating address to the Mercy Conference (*pp 10-11*), also dwells on the paralysing effects of deep-seated fear. "The gift of life", she says, "comes with a strong instinct for survival ... and its tool is fear." Fear inhibits us constantly from doing good. It is the devil's weapon. When we are victims of real or imaginary injury, fear can push us into totally inappropriate responses.

The churches – apart from our fundamentalist friends to the extreme right – have largely supported a call for a change in direction in the criminal justice system. These initiatives deserve our fullest support. It is high time that Ms Clarke, Mr Brash and their cohorts scrambled out of their cock-pit and put their minds and hearts to a subject that really matters.

Islam – hopes and fears

Islam is much in the news. The worlds of the West and of Islam are intertwined in a way never before experienced. They fear us, and we fear them.

Yet clearly the main cause of these fears is political. It is colonisation. A cluster of three articles (*pp 12-15*) explores this. In Palestine the Arabs are victims; in West Papua the Indonesian Muslims are the colonisers and oppressors. Most interesting, however, is the experience of an Imam in Britain, analysing what it is like to live in a secular society.

Religion has become an aggravating factor in the world's trouble spots. It should be a fount of peace and reconciliation between peoples.

M.H.

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Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed. The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means *"stitching the islands together..."*, bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.
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Renewing *Tui Motu*'s readership

Each year, we at *Tui Motu* hope and pray that the vast majority of supporters renew their subscriptions. This year, as we reach our 100th issue, we have another hope – that many loyal readers will also help us renew our readership. What do we mean by this? Essentially we are hoping that many of you might gift (especially younger) friends and family with a subscription to TM.

In my work life as an academic, items published in obscure places or formats are regarded as the 'grey literature'. *Tui Motu* is certainly not 'grey' in this sense. Rather, in the world of the New Zealand Catholic press it is an award-winning, widely known publication that is now old enough to have a reputation, but young enough to be fresh and interesting.

But in another sense, *Tui Motu* is grey literature. Our recent readership survey sharpened our focus on what the TM Board already knew – for better or worse, our subscriber base is overwhelmingly in the 'older' age group. If we are mostly greying (or already grey), what does that say about the future of the faith that is the magazine's raison d'etre?

Of course, there's nothing wrong with grey. It is the colour of wisdom, and a shade that says there's more to life than black and white. But who is the future of the church? Surely the future lies in hands and hearts younger than ours. For that reason, let's not live with Tui Motu being grey literature. Rather, let's make a concerted effort to pass on our ***taonga***.

Why do I call *Tui Motu* a ***taonga***? A treasure is something to be looked after. As a loyal band of supporters and subscribers, we have cared for the magazine so that it is now approaching its 100th issue. Treasure, like talent, should not remain hidden. Rather, it should be shared. Younger people (and we're talking under 50) are family people who may be just too busy to have thought about subscribing. Or maybe they feel they can't afford to. This is where you can help?

To facilitate this passing on the treasure that is *Tui Motu*, we are offering a special Jubilee gift subscription (in anticipation, perhaps, of the season of giving). We challenge subscribers to offer at least one gift subscription (at the specially discounted price of $40) to a person or family younger than yourself. In this way, we can take effective action to rejuvenate – literally 'make younger' – our readership.

Spring is a time of planting. Grey days will always be with us, but new growth and blossom speak of different futures. Jubilee is 'a season or an occasion of joyful celebration'.

Now is the time to celebrate *Tui Motu*. And now is also the time to renew our readership. Please consider supporting this special appeal, and help us build community through the connecting of our lives and faith journeys. We are printing a much longer run of the 100th issue in the confident hope that you will respond generously.

***Dr Robin Kearns**, Board of Directors*

(Robin Kearns is a Professor in the Department of Geography, University of Auckland)

letters to the editor

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not altering meaning.

Response articles (up to a page) are also welcome, but need to be by negotiation

Israel and Palestine – 1

Chris Sullivan (*Sept TM letter*) makes good points, but Israel is a modern invention – largely of the British – just after WWII. Britain had the UN Mandate to manage and control Palestine, which at that time occupied the area now shared between Israel and the remnants of Palestine. Britain tried to limit Jewish migration to numbers that the Palestinians could absorb, but the Jews, disturbed by the recent events in Europe, were determined to force their way in wholesale.

This process gradually morphed from fairly peaceful agitation against British rule into actual terrorist organisations using bombings and assassinations to further their attempts to force Britain to get out and leave them to get on with it. The British finally acquiesced and divested themselves of the mandate, so that, subsequently, the State of Israel came into being, but with UN-determined boundaries that were much smaller than those which were subsequently forced by constant determined expansion into Palestinian territories.

Sadly, the Jewish people in Israel largely have themselves to blame for their present unpopularity in the region as they used every possible means, both legal and illegal, to force first the British out, and then the Palestinians themselves. I sympathise with the Jewish wish to return to a 'homeland' ... But they have gone about getting in, and then expanding their territory, by brutal repression and aggression. (*abridged*)

Tony Ryan, Wainuiomata

Israel and Palestine – 2

Chris Sullivan writes an impassioned response. But I think one needs to distinguish, as separate realities, ethnicity from culture from nationality. "Questioning a nation's right to exist is abhorrent". Yes, but the solution can no more be imposed on the Palestinians than on the Israelis.

I would be interested to hear how Chris Sullivan intends solving the demands of the Kurds, the Basques, the Tamils, the Tibetans, the Maoris, the Aboriginees – and that's not even looking at Africa, North America, the Caribbean and South America.

A Williams, Auckland

Food for the journey

Thank you for the beautiful reflection by Glynn Cardy – ***Eucharist: food for the journey*** (*TM Sept.*), one of the best I've ever read.

The Eucharist makes really and truly present to us those struggling for peace and justice, together with all of creation. This is made possible through the real, true and substantial presence of God himself in the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is given to us to unite us with God and with all of creation and to sustain us in the difficult work for justice and for peace, on the picket lines with Joe Hill, and in every frontline and trench where the Kingdom of God is being built.

Chris Sullivan, Pakuranga

Theodora the bishop

Carl Telford (*letter Aug TM*) may well be correct with his alternative explanation of the title 'Theodora Episcopa.' I think he has missed a more important point. In his letter he states that Theodora's blessedness had its source in her motherhood and her role as a virtuous wife.

His remarks are reminiscent of those of the woman in *Luke 11:27-28*. She said to Jesus: "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that fed you." Jesus never denied this was a source of blessing, but he expanded her vision by replying: "More blessed still are those who hear the word of God and keep it."

For Theodora, this may have meant being 'virtuous wife and mother', but more and more Catholic women today are hearing the word of God spoken to them in a call to priesthood. Women do not ask to be ordained in order to 'be praised', as Fr. Telford seems to suggest. They ask for ordination because their Lord calls them.

The question is whether Christ is satisfied with the present role of women in the church. Judging from the number of women worldwide who have heard the call to priesthood, it would seem not.

Adriana Janus, Auckland

Plight of the Aboriginals

I enjoyed Norman Habel's interview (*TM Sept.*) so much. The relationship between the indigenous people of Central Australia and the land (the whole eco-system) is something dear to my heart.

I lived for many years in the 'Centre' as a lay missionary, largely with different groups of indigenous people but mostly with the Eastern Arrernte. The Lutherans went there in the 1880s, walking from South Australia with sheep, looking for Aboriginal people to mission to. Hermansburg/Ntaria was born. It is now a place rife with petrol sniffing, alcohol and the many social diseases that have swamped the people and marginalised them in their own land.

That is a symptom of our society's unwillingness to accept, to take up, or even to consider the wonder of the ways of these formerly nomadic but deeply spiritual people.

John Pettit, Kopua Abbey

The environment & eating meat

Most measures for protecting the environment apply globally, but reducing the consumption of meat (*Mary Betz, TM Sept*) is not one of them. Grass and other vegetation, converting energy from sunlight and watered by rain, has fed the grazing animals that have been one of our main food sources for many thousands of years. If we farm under conditions that respect our soils and rivers, there is no reason why this utterly natural conversion should not continue, as in every other country with a similar climate and soils.

However, one can sympathise with environmentalists in areas such as the USA where much of the meat is produced under conditions that break just about every rule in the book; animals kept indoors and fed on maize, itself the product of energy-consuming production and transportation.

Brian Wilkins, Wellington

Global warming

Yes, we are getting warmer. The current ice age (yes, we are still in it!) began about 3 million years ago. The last time the ice cover was less than it is now was 125,000 years ago, and the time before that was 250,000, suggesting a cycle. So it is difficult to predict the future (remember the 'population explosion' – standing room only in 2000?), or whether we can change it. One asteroid hit could again plunge us back into a severe ice age. (*abridged*)

R L Dowden, Dunedin

Do we get enough of enoughness?

Social Justice Week came and went. *Caritas* provided parishes with excellent and inspiring material. Many people, I'm sure, were moved to question whether they personally – and society generally – were not treading too heavily on this precious earth. But will it remain just another programme attended, another discussion group we were part of, another booklet to cram into our bookshelves? What change happened in our hearts? What impact did it have on the way we live each day?

I was struck by a comment made recently by the Anglican Bishop of London, Richard Chartres. He wound up an article on the problems facing planet earth with this assertion: "(there is) an urgent need for a Christian rediscovery of the Sabbath as the crown of creation and a festival of equilibrium and enoughness". He observes that in the *Genesis* narrative of Creation the climax is not in the creation of human beings on the sixth day but in the peace of sabbath on the seventh. God rests. We too need to rest, to lie dormant like the earth, to stop doing and be content with being (*Tablet 2 September*).

Tui Motu devoted much of one issue to this theme (*March '04*). We defined sabbath, then, as *a time to weep, a time to dance*. In the Bible the Israelites extended 'sabbath' to the idea of Jubilee. It was not simply an injunction to rest and abstain from work every seventh day. Every seventh year the Israelites were to let the land lie fallow, cancel debts and release slaves. They were to put their world back in order and attempt to start again. And after 7 x 7 years, the 50th year, they were to declare a Jubilee. In the Jubilee Year all these restorative things were to be done, but also land was to be returned to its original owners(*Lev. 25*). *Deuteronomy 15* restates all this, but with special emphasis is on the release of slaves.

It would be interesting to know how scrupulously the Israelites observed all these injunctions. It is important to note they are not just moral precepts but involve the whole economy of society. People's livelihoods and their worldly goods are at stake. They are social, not just individual, imperatives.

Indeed one of the big problems about sabbath is that it is difficult to achieve on one's own. When none of the shops or supermarkets are open it's easy enough to put consumerism on hold for 24 hours. But when the whole world is involved in a ceaseless frenzy of rush and consumption, how do we achieve any degree of pause, of freedom from hassle, of peace? And how do we assuage within ourselves those nagging feelings of guilt that we are wasting precious time doing nothing, especially when everyone else appears to be busy?

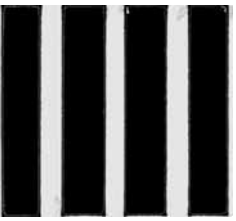
A favourite word of those who write on sabbath is 'rhythm'. A life lived with sabbath in mind is a life of recurring rhythms. "The Jubilee cycle," says one writer, "is rooted in the rhythms of earth, sun and moon. Count seven sunsets and we dance our way into sabbath. Count seven new moons, beginning with the month of spring and Passover and we reach the month of sabbath, filled with holy festivals. Count seven autumn equinoxes and we reach our sabbatical year, when all debts are cancelled, the land is not cultivated and the people share what they have stored or can forage."

These ideas conflict with the current economic dogmas regarding growth, profitability, globalisation, free trade, where the basic assumption is that there is only one direction for GDP to go and that is up. There was much idealism in the air during the Year 2000, when partly at the urging of Pope John Paul, the great powers sought to ease crippling burdens of debt which many developing countries were suffering. *Make Poverty History* was the cry.

Although some progress was made, it largely foundered because rich nations are unwilling to give up their privileged position of calling all the shots, of maintaining tariff barriers against trade from the poorer economies, of insisting that capital and labour must flow freely according to laws of economics, thus subjecting Third World countries to economic servitude. Jubilee was for others, not for the rich.

Sabbath means more than just stopping what you are doing, taking a spell. It entails giving God space in all aspects of life so that justice starts to rule the decisions we make. We begin to see that if we are wealthy the only thing to do is give it away. Jubilee is more than just space for making whoopee. It means being content with less so that others may have more. It means restoring balance. It means living in harmony with the basic rhythms of our existence. To quote Gandhi – yet again – it means '***living simply so that others may simply live***'.

M.H.



Lock 'em up and throw away the key! is that the best we can do?

New Zealand has always had a high imprisonment rate. There are strong political pressures to make it even higher. American Tom Cavanagh, attracted to New Zealand because of its enlightened Restorative Justice processes, makes an impassioned appeal that we should not follow the United States down a road leading to disaster

The sound of heavy chains being dragged on a tile floor echoed through the courthouse as I stood in the hallway waiting to go into court. After working in the American legal system for 20 years I recognised the sound of the chains used to secure hardened criminals charged with despicable crimes – handcuffs around their wrists and manacles around their ankles.

Then the sound came closer and a small boy about ten years old rounded the corner. He was barely able to drag the chains down the hall. A huge, heavily muscled, armed jail guard followed the child. I was shocked to see this boy treated in such a way and wondered what horrific thing he must have done to deserve such treatment.

Later I found the juvenile prosecutor and asked him about the boy I had seen; what had he done? The prosecutor said he was caught the day before stealing candy and arrested and put in jail overnight. This morning he was brought before the Magistrate to answer charges.

I was shocked. I thought if this is the best response we have to this boy's wrongdoing, then we as a society have failed and failed miserably. This traumatic event changed my life. Up until then I was aware, through my daily work in the courts, that our young people who broke the law were being treated more and more like mini-adults. That the children who appeared in court for the most part did not come from white affluent families. They were people who were minoritised and marginalised by the colour of their skin, their surname, poverty, additions, and mental illness. I knew that America was bent on getting tough on crime, and even though statistics showed that was a failed policy, politicians relentlessly pursued it.

After witnessing the event with the young boy, I committed myself to helping change the response of Americans to wrongdoing, particularly by our youngsters. I did not know how to create such change.

A New Zealand response

Shortly after I came upon a copy of *The Common Good*, which focused on restorative justice. I learned how the New Zealand Catholic Bishops had endorsed restorative justice in their Pastoral Letter titled, *Creating New Hearts: Moving from Retributive Justice to Restorative Justice*.

The bishops recognised restorative justice to be congruent with Catholic social teaching because it is based on recognising and respecting the dignity of all persons, focusing on creating a society based on the common good. Furthermore, it targets relationships – creating healthy ones and repairing those harmed by wrongdoing. Fundamentally it is a process that builds the capacity of families and communities to respond to crime in a healthy and non-violent way without the domination of legal professionals.

I realised I had found the catalyst for change I was looking for. I became committed to the principles of restorative justice and began learning more from people in New Zealand. I wrote about the idea in American legal system journals. Eventually I created a website: www.restorativejustice.com. I decided to travel to New Zealand and learn more about restorative justice. Finally, in June of 2004 my dream became reality and I arrived in New Zealand on a Fulbright Fellowship to study the use of restorative practices in schools.

I had wanted to come here ever since I realised this country led the world in institutionalising restorative justice principles, beginning with the *Child, Young Persons and their Families Act* in 1989. I wanted to learn more from Maori about traditional ways of responding to wrongdoing and conflict after reading *Te Puao-te-Ata-tu* ('Day Break'), the 1988 Report of

the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare, and learning that the 1989 Act was based on that document.

At the end of my Fulbright Fellowship I was offered work with a Maori educational initiative, ***Te Kotahitanga***, and my wife and I are privileged to be able to stay in our adopted home. I continue to engage in every opportunity I can to learn more about restorative justice in New Zealand and particularly from a Maori perspective.

Punitive culture in NZ

However, I am concerned that Ron Mark of the New Zealand First party has endorsed a get-tough-on-crime approach for responding to misbehaviour of young people in the *Young Offenders (Serious Crimes)* Bill. I do not understand why MP Mark would abandon a wonderful gift (restorative justice) for a policy that has failed in America. Obviously Mark's approach results in increased spending for prisons. It is a policy that discriminates against people who belong to minorities, those addicted or mentally ill or poor, particularly those people who are Maori.

At a time of budget constraints we in New Zealand cannot afford to pour more and more money into our prisons. Research from the American Bureau of Prison Statistics shows that imprisoning people is failed policy. This research shows 60 percent of the people who are in prison leave and commit crimes again and return to prison. What other segment of our government will we let fail 60 percent of the time and continue to fund it at ever-increasing rates?

The policy of increased funding of prisons is bankrupting other vital public policies, like education, housing, and health care. We are sending a message to our young people – *we are willing to pay for imprisoning you if you commit a crime but are not willing to pay for a quality education*.

I suggest we remember our original definition of restorative justice as a process of responding to wrongdoing and conflict in a way that focuses on healing the harm (particularly the harm to relationships) resulting from wrongdoing and conflict. This process involves all the persons affected by the event or events, particularly the person harmed, the person causing the harm, and the affected community.

I propose that New Zealand politicians abandon the failed American policy of getting tough on crime and return to the roots that were adopted as a policy in 1989 of responding to wrongdoing and conflict based on restorative justice. Research has shown that restorative justice is a proven programme in reducing recidivism (reoffending) and improving victim satisfaction.

Restorative justice

When we return again to the principles of restorative justice we will have a policy where …

- persons harmed by wrongdoing and conflict, who we traditionally call victims, will be given a voice in the process and outcome. They will no longer be pawns in an adversarial system that either leaves them out or makes them feel guilty;
- communities will be empowered by building their capacity to respond in the process and giving them a voice in the outcome. They will no longer be forced to sit and watch judges and lawyers as they engage in the formalities of the courtroom using unfamiliar language;
- the response to the problems resulting from wrongdoing and conflict will be more holistic and culturally sensitive. Spiritual and emotional values will be as important as the facts. The system will no longer be dominated by retribution and will be replaced by a philosophy of restoration;
- we will move from procedural to substantive justice. We will recognise that justice is not only about following the rules traditionally imposed by courts but also requires us to produce results that are fair and meets the needs of society as a whole.

I invite you to join me in urging New Zealand policy makers to replace the failed policy of getting tough on crime with a return to New Zealand's heritage of a world-renowned public policy based on restorative justice. Let's keep justice in our legal system. Let's continue to improve funding in education, housing, and health care rather than spending more and more money on imprisoning our young. Let's make New Zealand a safe place to live, where people know their neighbours and care about them.

Tama tu, Tama ora, Tama moe, Tama mate
You stand, you live, you sleep, you die

Just as the authors of ***Te Puao-te-Ata-tu*** stood ready at the dawn of a new beginning, let us return to the roots of restorative justice in New Zealand and be ready to begin once again. ■

Tom Cavanagh is Senior Research Fellow, Te Kotahitanga School of Education, Hamilton

Inside the N.Z. prison system

Tui Motu *interviewed Kim Workman, National Director of the Prison Fellowship of New Zealand. He had bad news – and good – to tell us*

Imprisonment in NZ

In the last eight years the prison population has gone up by 50 percent – to over seven thousand. Meanwhile the overall crime rate per head of population has actually gone down. There is no clear relationship between the crime rate and the number of people in prison. It is simply not true that the more people you lock up the lower is the rate of crime.

Indeed for all sorts of reasons what can happen is exactly the opposite: if you take men away from their families, the children are seven times more likely to themselves end up in prison than the children of non-prisoners. Without a father present the prisoner's family can become increasingly dysfunctional.

Prison sentences are getting longer, partly due to New Zealand's punitive culture. John Pratt, a criminologist at Victoria University, has observed that New Zealand puts more people in prison and for longer sentences than, say, Canada, Australia or the United Kingdom. We have a culture, he says, that marginalises people who do not conform or belong to a narrow morality range. Anyone who breaks the law outside that range is seen as 'on the outer'.

The churches have a real task on their hands to change this culture: the Gospel urges us to care for these people and bring them back, not lock them up. The basic Christian message is ***forgive***. Sometimes, says Kim, when I speak to some Christian groups I wonder if they have forgotten the New Testament exists!

Right across the world minority indigenous groups – especially the Aboriginals in Australia – are grossly over represented in the criminal justice system. New immigrant groups add to that imbalance: the poor and underprivileged always figure more in the prison statistics.

The government has moved in recent times to target assistance to places where crime rates are higher, like South Auckland. Twenty percent of the families there produce 80 percent of the crime. These families are not changed by seeking to impose alien values on them but by working on the values they have and supporting the natural leaders in those communities.

And this is already happening. Sam Chapman, a Maori in South Auckland, has been working with Mongrel Mob members and achieving remarkable results in keeping them out of prison. The leaders become persuaded they do not want their children to end up the way they were. Change is happening in those communities from within.

Out of seven thousand people in prison at the moment no more than five hundred (perhaps five percent) represent a real risk to the community in terms of violence: these are the ones who need to be kept out of circulation. Over 40 percent of those sentenced go to prison for less than six months – for drunk driving, minor burglary, benefit fraud etc. What are they doing in prison? They have no opportunity there to do anything to pay back the people they have offended.

The prison experience is more likely to do harm than good. Those 40 percent should be dealt with either by a restorative justice process or by community service. They need to be given a chance to pay back to society what they have taken. As an alternative to prison, home detention usually results in less re-offending.

Ho Karowai Whakapono

This ***Faith Based Unit,*** with 60 beds, a part of Rimutaka Prison, Upper Hutt, has been in existence since October 2003. It is the initiative of a group of Christian churches. Prisoners volunteer to join it. You cannot railroad people into a Christian environment like this. They have to come prepared to explore the Christian faith.

They need to become committed to a programme, like getting up early in the morning for devotions. They do not have to be Christians: we have had Buddhists and Muslims. What we are providing is a sanctuary within the prison system for those who want to change. Twenty percent of those entering prison identify that they have a spiritual need. They may say: *my life is empty and I think God may be the answer*; *the other programmes haven't worked for me*; or simply *I'm sick of offending and of being in and out of prison: there must be something better*.

It isn't easy to change when you are surrounded by other prisoners who harass you. But when they come into the programme they are not being proselytised. They come to a commitment at their own pace and in

their own way. There is an hour and a half Bible study every night; there are services of worship. They get a real understanding if what Christian commitment means.

It is a bit of a culture shock for those who may have been in prison for eight or nine years already. There is a heavy emphasis on encouraging interpersonal relationships. There can be hugging – which is very strange for a person used to punching and throttling as the usual forms of physical expression.

They find relations between prisoners and prison officers quite different: it's no longer 'us' versus 'them'. The emphasis is on brotherhood and trust, with the officers being held accountable for their behaviour too. They are all equally members of the 'body of Christ'.

After about eight months each prisoner is linked to a mentor who comes from outside the prison. We try to match mentor to prisoner. The mentor visits the prisoner regularly, provides pastoral care, and when the prisoner is released, helps with employment, accommodation and relationships. Often the mentor's church group will also welcome the released man.

The mentor's task is to provide spiritual and social support. If prisoners have encountered Christianity for the first time when they were inside, then going to a mainstream church outside will be a daunting experience for them. The evidence is that if they come out with a belief system, the released prisoner is more likely to survive later crises.

We don't expect instant miracles. Eighty percent of inmates have drug or alcohol problems; 20 percent have mental health issues. The prisons are not equipped to deal with these, so very few have had adequate treatment. Nevertheless, those who come through our programme are less likely to re-offend and the seriousness of their offences is less. And many do not re-offend at all.

We have been running *Ho Korowai Whakapono* now for three years. That's not yet long enough to be sure we are on the right track. But the indications so far are good. Drug use and violence are well down. The Wellington Regional Manager has been extremely supportive. He says that of all the specialist focus units introduced into the system, this is the one that has caused the least hassles.

So far the unit is unique in New Zealand although there are plans to start another. It is one of the nine units within the Rimutaka Prison complex. The inmates live separately although they will mix with the other prisoners at work. Our people have won the reputation of being good workers, requiring minimum supervision. Sometimes they have had pressure on them from the other prisoners to use drugs: they simply have to learn to manage that.

Johnny's story

Johnny was jailed for grievous bodily harm. He had beaten up his girlfriend after finding her cheating on him. Adjusting to the new set of values in the ***Faith Based Unit*** was hard, and the process of change took time.

"At first it was 'slow as'; it took me ages to get on my knees and have my first prayer. It happened gradually, learning how to pray, and then gradually the things I was asking Him for, he gave to me. Like strength to get over the shame of being in here, and what I did."

"When I first started forgiving myself, it was like being set free. It felt really good. I think that was the first time I felt that God was really working in my life. And that's when I started reading the Bible heaps and praying a lot. It's been a pretty unreal journey."

Restorative justice within the prison system

The restorative process can take place at any time along the course of a sentence. In the case of serious crime it would be rare for the victims – or the victims' family – to be ready to meet the perpetrator at the very start. They are too hurt and angry. But some way down the track, even a victim may initiate the meeting. Or the prisoner may request it. And both have to agree.

When the victim meets the offender and hears his story, the image of a monster becomes replaced by the image of a human being, who is perhaps dysfunctional, frail and vulnerable. The victim becomes compassionate towards this person. There is extraordinarily healing for the victim.

What is often not recognised is that many offenders have an underlying sense of remorse, but they have no way of expressing it within the prison system. The restorative process provides that. And they become motivated to reduce their own offending, and their empathy towards the victim grows. We are trying to persuade the Department of Corrections to fund this process so we can expand it.

So far we have only managed a handful of cases, but I'm sure if we were able to advertise it and the funds were available, it would increase fivefold. (*Tui Motu* asked how readers might contribute. It is through the Prison Fellowship website: www:pfnz.org.nz.)

Also, Jackie Katounis, manager of Restorative Justice services, is very interested in any victims of crimes who are willing to go into a prison and talk to prisoners about the impact the offence had on them and their lives. The *Sycamore Tree* Project which the Prison Fellowship runs needs a flow of victims who are willing to tell their stories. These tales can have a profound effect on offender and victim alike. ■

Ho Karowai Whakapono
means, literally, 'cloak of faith'

A larger place

At a recent Mercy Forum, held in Auckland well-known author Joy Cowley challenged her audience to 'think big' in their response to the call of God

The call to faith is a call to a larger place. As people of faith, we all know that sense of God leaning on our heart, a love calling us away on a path of devotion and service. But we also know that commitment isn't arrival. It is the beginning of a journey, and what God puts in front of us is often surprising, not what we had planned at all. But when the voice of the heart says, "My beloved, follow me," we know two things. That whatever our external circumstances, his life is our life. And that he will always lead us to a larger place.

Jesus never did allow orthodox observance to get in the way of God's will, and that still happens. Catherine McAuley discovered this. Here was a young woman called to a larger place that others saw as impractical and impossible, a pious dream. Answering the call to be an image of Christ in the world is something that the Sisters of Mercy have been doing ever since.

Living in life's school

Let's look at what it means to be travelling to a larger place, both as individuals and as community. When I do writing workshops for children, I remind them: "Ever since the beginning of the universe there has never been another person exactly like you, and there never will be again."

And here is another fact, miraculously true. We can gaze at the heavens on a clear starry night and feel dwarfed by the immensity of the heavens. And yet within us we have a greater universe. Science reminds us that there are more cells in a human body than there are stars and planets in the universe. Maybe, in a spiritual, poetic, way, we can describe ourselves as cells in the body of God.

If you were to ask me now to state what I believe, I'd probably say something like this:

I believe that we all come from a greater reality to which we return, which we call God, and our short time here in life's school is for the growth of the soul.

Life is God's glorious gift and it's also challenging. It's meant to be hard work. We are given lessons. If I don't learn a lesson, it will be repeated – again and again – and each time it tends to be more forceful until I can no longer ignore it.

Physical and material circumstances are not indicators of how well anyone will do in life's school. Power and possessions can actually become a distraction, if we become attached to them. They can become idols. Ideas, too, can become idols. Whatever we hold in a clenched fist will get in the way of spiritual progress.

There is a Jewish belief that we see and hear what we are meant to see and hear. We know when we hear what we are meant to hear. Sometimes the message will come to us several times before it sinks in. But when it does, we make this amazing discovery. We had this truth inside us all the time. We just needed someone to tell it to us, so that it could be unwrapped within us.

The Eucharist and the Word of God through Scripture are food for the journey to the larger place. So is the presence of Christ in others. What about the Word of God in nature? Jesus drew most of his parables from nature, and nature still speaks to us in parables for growth. In a green country such as ours,

Becoming the change we long to see

If there was a consistent motif running through the Mercy Forum held in Auckland in August, it was crystallised by keynote presenter Dr Ann Gilroy (*above right*) in her suggestion that as women and men of Mercy, we should seek to be the change we want to see. Perhaps in significant ways we are already becoming the change we want to be.

Sisters of Mercy continue to invite companions to join them in discerning the call and shaping Mercy's response, the lines between vowed religious and lay partners are being radically if subtly redrawn. The recent appointment of Maori lay women to lead two of Mercy Auckland's community development initiatives is a powerful statement of what Treaty commitment implies and of where real partnership can lead.

Mercy Day this year celebrates 175 years of Mercy. The call is, as always, to look ahead as well as to remember. Mercy's future is one we help to make, by becoming the change we long to see.

Dennis Horton

Dennis Horton is Director of Mission for the Sisters of Mercy, Auckland

the messages are everywhere, lessons from the rhythm of the seasons, from light and dark, from rivers and sea.

The next time you are in a place of natural beauty, try this little game. Pretend that you have only ten minutes before you become totally blind. In that ten minutes, you need to remember every details of whatever is in front of you. It is likely that at the end of that ten minutes, you will have an intense awareness of God in creation. This is because you have spent that ten minutes in the present moment. Whatever brings us into the present moment can speak to us, through our senses, of God.

Joy Cowley (*left*) and Dr Ann Gilroy RSJ, presenters at the Mercy Forum, Auckland

Fear and the shadow of evil

The gift of life comes with a strong instinct for survival which functions as the human ego, and its tool is fear. The primal survival instinct serves us well in our early years of growth. The child needs to build a good healthy ego, and fear protects the child from danger. But in adult journey, we are confronted with the need to reverse these trends. We enter with Jesus on the road to paradox, which was once described by a 15th-century monk whose name is not known:
Know thyself: tis half the path to God; then lose thyself, and the rest of the way is trod.

As a child I was bewildered by the sayings of Jesus that seemed to be full of doom and gloom. *He who loves his life will lose it... Take up your cross and follow me... Except a grain of wheat die, it remains a single grain.* It is only at the appropriate time that we understand these sayings to be the invitation to a freedom in Christ that is much greater than the small prison of self.

My definition of evil is the distortion of the instinct for survival. We see in the animal kingdom the brutish sins of humankind – murder, torture, greed, lust for power and territory, the killing of the new-born. Animals can eat their new-born young, or they can simply walk away and leave them to die. Those who have worked with animals know this. In the animal kingdom all of these 'evils' are linked to the survival instinct. I believe that is true also for humans.

When Mother Teresa was asked why she worked for the destitute and dying, she shocked an interviewer with the answer: "I do this to combat the Hitler in me." Mahatma Ghandi was speaking about much the same thing when he said, "When I see a man doing good, I seek to be like that man. When I see a man doing evil, I look to my own heart."

Wise words. Unless we know and own our own potential for evil, we are working with a grave handicap; for in the mystery of paradox, what is shadow in our lives is the point of potential growth. Darkness is light unborn. Fear is always ready to be sacrificed to love. That is at the heart of the mystery that took Jesus to the cross and through to the resurrection.

Love – our compass for the journey

The reality of our journey with Jesus is very simple. The tool of journey is love. The inhibiter is fear. The writer of the *1 John* put it succinctly: There *is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out all fear.*

We know fear, but as our capacity for love increases, so does the fear diminish. I find it useful to gauge my own actions and reactions with that measure. Does this come from love? Or does it come from fear?

There is no perfection for us in life's school. Thank God for that. Perfection has very little room for growth. We claim our errors and try to learn from them. And our frailty, far from being a source of concern, is reason for gratitude. It is our God-given growing space. The American poet Leonard Cohen expresses it another way:
Ring the bells that still can ring.
Forget your perfect offering.
There is a crack in everything.
That's how the light gets in.

The Sisters of Mercy have already journeyed to a larger place. To use yet another metaphor, you are a river which has broken its banks and spilled out on a parched land. The new green of growth goes with you.

I can't tell you what the future will bring. That is with you and God. But I do know this truth of journey: in the love of Christ, we do not diminish as individuals or as community. There will be change, there will be new challenges, new apostolates, but always you travel to a larger place. Jesus calls you. ***Step out of the boat without fear, and you will walk on water.*** ■

Joy's address here is an abridged version: first printed in Mercy Focus

Three different faces of Islam – in secular Britain; in West Papua, colonial masters; in Palestine, a minority

Ibraham Mogra

The Tablet *interviews a 'liberal' Imam, from Leicester, an English city where Muslims will soon be in the majority*

A recent interview with a prominent Imam in the London Tablet *by religious affairs writer Theo Hobson highlights the conflict between Islam and the secular pluralism of modern Britain.*

Ibraham Mogra was born of Indian parents in Malawi, coming to Britain as a child with his family. He lives in Leicester, a city whose Muslim minority is on the brink of becoming a majority. There are new mosques springing up all over. Yet a recent survey reveals that barely half the Muslims in Britain regard it as their country. A third between the age of 18 and 24 say they would rather live under sharia law than secular British law.

Ibrahim, however, is by no means one of those. One of Britain's most respected mainstream imams, he says emphatically: "There is no country I would rather live in than Britain. Britain allows me to be who I am, to practise my religion.

"There have been no serious cases of militancy in Leicester's mosques. If someone was preaching hate in one of our mosques, the congregation wouldn't sit back and tolerate it; they would want to do something about it, to stop it."

Isn't it true that Muslim leaders have often failed to curb extremism; indeed many have come close to justifying violence?

"We have always said very clearly that two wrongs don't make a right. Even if Muslims are being butchered in other parts of the world, that gives no one the right to butcher people in the London Underground (scene of the July 7 bombings last year).

"There are more than 1200 mosques in Britain and only a handful have been problematic. We have condemned terrorism very clearly from day one, unconditionally. However, when we condemn atrocities it is important for us that we also address the reasons why people carry them out. That is not to justify; it's to look at the surrounding issues."

There is still a minority in this country that disagrees with that and twists Islam into an evil ideology ...

"There's a small number of Muslims who have a perverted understanding of Islam, who consider themselves at war with Britain because of her foreign policy. If you take that policy out of the equation, these hate preachers will not have much ammunition to win recruits. So there has to be a genuine effort to resolve these international issues. Palestine, for instance, has been ignored for more than five decades."

But isn't it also true that these extremists hate British culture?

"There is so much in British culture that is beautiful, which has to be embraced by all. However, there are a few things that I as a Muslim, along with other non-Muslims, find unacceptable. For instance this growing culture of binge drinking, this culture of yobbish behaviour, of drug abuse. But the hatred is of the evil actions, not of the individuals – as a Muslim I'm not allowed to hate anyone."

Something that worries secular Britain is that Muslims want to reject secular liberalism in favour of sharia law. What do you think?

"Sharia simply means path of obedience to God. There are four sources for sharia law. The Qu'ran is complemented by the Traditions of Muhammad, peace upon him; then we have the consensus of scholars; and analogy which helps scholars derive new laws for contemporary issues. Every Muslim should have his or her life governed by sharia in a personal capacity.

"In some Muslim countries the government might want to implement sharia law, but that's not always the case. It's up to the people. Do I want sharia to be implemented in Britain? No. I'm happy to be ruled by sharia law in my personal life, and by UK law in my public life."

Is not the original concept of sharia law to be one thing, totally comprehensive?

"Even in Muslim countries, non-Muslim citizens have always been exempt from aspects of it. Sharia caters for other religions to follow their own laws, adapted to circumstances. For us in Britain, in the vast majority of cases there is no conflict at all, but unfortunately the potential problems are always highlighted, and the beautiful things about sharia are never spoken of. Sharia, for instance, says that when I cook a meal I should cook a little extra and share it with my neighbour."

But are there not some laws which are simply unacceptable to most modern-minded people?

"Yes, there are aspects of the original understanding of sharia that contemporary liberal societies find outdated. Capital punishment is normally seen in that way. But within the mechanism of sharia there are so many aspects built into it that try to avert the final judgment. For example, the accusation of adultery requires four witnesses to the act, making it almost impossible to get a conviction.

"I think in some instances less compassion is shown when a sharia judgment is passed than there ought to be, than sharia itself requires. I would not want an alternative system of sharia law for British Muslims, but if there was an offer from the government I would accept it possibly only in relation to some aspects of family law, principally marriage and divorce, and inheritance."

Don't many Muslims see Britain as essentially immoral because its secular law always allows people the freedom to do things that Muslims see as immoral?

"If people want to go out and get drunk, or have relations before they are married, that is their choice. But we also have a collective responsibility as citizens to ensure that our societies don't disintegrate, and Islam tries to offer an example of a better way of living."

By kind permission from The Tablet *(Sept. 2) Abridged. website: www.**thetablet.co.uk***

Is it a good thing that society allows people to have sex before marriage, rather than trying to outlaw it?

"Because my religion says that people should not have sexual relations unless they are married to each other, I cannot say that that is a good thing. But I can say that it is a free choice of people who want to live like that.

"Anything that my religion condemns as a sin I cannot endorse as a good thing. Had it been a good thing for society, God would not have categorised it as a sin. We Muslims have never called for a ban on premarital sex in Britain, and we never will. But we say that it is wrong."

Finally, a lot of younger Muslims feel excluded from British society. Would the creation of an explicitly secular state help?

"I don't see that as a dominant cause for feelings of exclusion. I don't see why equality should be achieved by the exclusion, say, of bishops from the House of Lords when it could be achieved by the inclusion of others." ■

Let my people go!

– another East Timor in West Papua

West Papua is a much bigger country than East Timor. Yet there are strong similarities: in both cases the Indonesians took over the land with little or no reference to the indigenous people. They came as colonists and remained as rulers. Socratez Sofyan Yoman, a Christian leader from W Papua, recently came to New Zealand at the invitation of *Pax Christi.*

Socratez is a passionate advocate for free Papua; he is something of an old-fashioned prophet, angered at the enslavement of his people and staunch in his determination to face down their persecutors and to set them free from their oppression. He comes across as more of a passionate man than an analytical one, a preacher rather than an intellectual. His message is simple and straightforward: ***the Indonesians are killing my people and this genocide must be stopped by the intervention of the outside world.***

He cites the regular toll from military and police operations, particularly in the mineral-rich highlands, the suppression of indigenous culture, the Christian religion, education, social and economic infrastructure by masses of Indonesian migrants and the overall marginalisation of his Melanesian people. His heroes are Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu and Carlos Ximenes Belo, all of whom shared the common prophetic call: ***Let my people go!***

Socratez' cry brings back images of New Zealand in the mid-19th Century. Like the Maori hapu of the 1860s, the 270 tribal peoples of Papua are being subjected to a rapid colonisation which leaves no future for them unless they allow themselves to be assimilated into the Indonesian culture, economy and state. Church services are largely conducted in the Indonesian language; schools are taught in Bahasa Indonesia, the shops and business centres are

run by migrants, even those which sell Papuan cultural artefacts. The growing towns of Merauke and Timika are migrant towns, with Papuans as bystanders and observers of their economic energy. And everywhere, at the entrance to even the smallest village, are military posts and institutional headquarters.

Papua is an occupied land. Following the brutal assassination of the charismatic independence leader Theys Eluay, the Papuan resistance strategy has been focussed on the ***Papua – Land of Peace*** campaign. Socratez insists that periodic 'incidents' featuring the Papuan Freedom Movement (OPM) are creations of the Indonesian military, and become excuses for 'pre-emptive strikes' against tribal resistance to land grabs. Leaders of church and civil society, such as Socratez, have denounced violence of any kind in favour of respectful dialogue.

When violence does break out, such as at Timika and Jayapura earlier this year over abuse of land and royalty rights associated with Freeport mining operations, church leaders have gone to the Indonesian authorities. In Socratez' case, this has led to his car being trashed and his passport taken.

Meanwhile the leaders of the independence movement have gone into exile. The flag can no longer be flown. Muslim immigrants from Java have been settled in great numbers, and now are a majority in West Papua. Unfortunately Christians who are quite a big minority have offered little resistance. Some evangelicals tend to see the colonial government as the hand of God.

Mama Yosepa, (*second from right in front*) was imprisoned in a crate for months for opposing Freeport mining operations on her land. Pictured here with her supporters in front of the Mama Yosepa Women's Centre, Timika.

Socratez insists that West Papua must become independent of Indonesia, as East Timor did, because the people are Melanesian and entirely different from the Javanese colonists. The Papuan people are becoming marginalised in their own country. Australia and the United States tend to support the Indonesian government in order to preserve regional stability and as a barrier against terrorism. They prefer strong government and fear fragmentation into smaller, unstable states. Socratez and his fellow Papuans look to New Zealand having a real role to play as mediator. ■

(Tui Motu *is endebted to Kevin McBride, of Pax Christi, for material for this story*)

Another Face of Hamas

Kiwi Christina Gibb, of the Christian Peacemaker Team, meets Farhan Ommar, a Palestinian Mayor on the West Bank. She learns about the Israeli occupation through his eyes

Forty two-year-old Farhan Alqam, mayor of Beit Ommar, a town of 14,000 people between Hebron and Bethlehem, is one of a number of Hamas mayors elected in the West Bank municipal elections last October.

He is extremely interested in 'non-violent resistance'. He hosted about 30 people in the Council chambers at the end of July. The group included four members of the Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT), members of other church groups as well as a political delegation from the United States.

Farhan Alqam spoke first about himself and about his town, Beit Ommar. He is sincere and charming, and came across as a man of integrity, strongly committed to the community and people he serves. He speaks good English, and had no translator, aide, security or other people with him. He appeared to be unarmed. Like most Palestinian men he has been arrested – three times, and once jailed for 7 months – for "resisting the Occupation".

Beit Ommar is a farming community. Even those with other jobs farm their family land after work, so land is of special importance to all the people, including doctors, teachers, lawyers and shopkeepers. They love every piece of their land – more than their life, he emphasised: the land *is* their life.

"I am very happy to welcome you", Farhan Alqam said to us. "I am very happy that some American people are willing to come and find the real facts. I believe that if the American people knew the real facts, they would change the policy of the American State. If you want to be the only guardians of the

security of the world, you must look at all peoples in the same way.

"You do not have the right to look at the Palestinians in a different way from the Israelis. The brotherhood of humanity – *all* human beings – should bring us close to one another. There are enough natural disasters without us creating wars and destruction, and demolishing things to make the rich richer. It is very hard to change the mind of many people with the same idea. I pray to God to give you the power you need to change the media.

"Hamas has been given the face of a terrorist movement rather than a resistance movement. I ask you: *Is the occupation finished? Has the killing of Palestinian people stopped? Has the supply of American weapons to Israel stopped? Has the transfer of American tax dollars to Israel stopped?*

"Do you know how many Hamas persons are involved in violent resistance? Do you know how many Hamas persons – far, far more – are involved in humanitarian work for the Palestinian people?

"But they must at the same time defend themselves and their children. Tell the Americans to end the Occupation, and the resistance will end. Now, a Palestinian feels he has no human rights. For instance, Israeli settlements and settlers confiscate more and more Palestinian land – backed up by the Israeli Courts and security regulations. They confiscate not only our lands, but our hopes and our future. Whatever happens to us, we own our *hope*."

Can you tell us about specific problems you face in Beit Ommar?

"Many problems arise from decisions of the military and the expansion of the settlements. Israeli settlers prevent farmers from harvesting their produce and working on their land for long periods. And the Israeli police behave badly, and do not defend Palestinian people when they need help.

"Beit Ommar covers 30 square km. The Wall will confiscate 5 or 6 square km - the land of 50 farmers, or about one-sixth of all our land. At the edge of Beit Ommar there is an army watchtower by the only entrance road. One soldier can make the village a prison by closing the gate.

"Six years ago the Municipality established a market for the farmers but almost straightaway it was closed as a 'security threat' by the Army. This year, with help from the Red Cross, we reopened it – but this made the Israelis unhappy. They brought concrete blocks and closed the road to the market – for 'security reasons', which cannot be questioned."

Where are the markets for your produce?

"A small percentage goes in local consumption here in Beit Ommar. All grow the same products – each family takes what they need, and gives to their brothers, neighbours, friends. Usually, the Israeli market takes most: our produce is very good quality, very good taste, grown with no artificial fertilisers, no irrigation. But this year and last, there has been pressure put on us: Israel has closed its markets against Palestine.

"We cannot export, because everything has to go through Israel, who will not allow it out. We cannot sell in the Hebron District, because they grow the same fruit and vegetables as we do. That leaves only Gaza and the Northern West Bank. When the Gaza Strip is open we have a good market there, but mostly it is closed. Even in the Northern West Bank we have constant trouble at checkpoints."

What are your thoughts on non-violence?

"As mayor I must serve my people. I believe strongly that resistance does not need to be violent. Palestinian people resist sometimes with violence, but most often in other ways, including humanitarian." I asked Farhan Alqam if there were many Hamas mayors like him, choosing non-violence as their primary way of operating. He said *yes, there are many – in fact most of them.*

Farhan Alqam was arrested by the Israeli police a few days later. He was held for 15 days before being released. Christina visited him and interviewed him again.

He said that during the first few days he had been very badly treated. He had refused to be handcuffed in his house in front of his wife, but he was beaten up in the jeep that took him away. He was kept standing outside, blindfolded and with his hands tied with tight plastic, for about three hours until sunrise. He compared the beating and humiliations to conditions at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay.

He was kept in isolation, unable to speak to any other detainees for the whole day. It is very hard for lawyers to gain access to their clients. Visiting conditions for families are appalling – rare visiting opportunities, long waits, strip searches, very short visiting times, with double plastic and mesh barriers between visitors and detainees.

When he appeared before the Military Court, after 14 days, Farhan was accused of 'illegal activities' which were a threat to security. He was allowed to speak in his own defence, and explained about his duties and responsibilities as Mayor, which took all his time and energies. He said he had taken part in no illegal activities, and asked what these activities were supposed to be. After deliberation the judge showed he believed Farhan, by cancelling the order for his detention. ■

Christina Gibb is a New Zealander and a member of the Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT), based in Hebron, West Bank

Flowers in the Bible

The Old Testament

An invitation to conduct a spring flower service led me to think about flowers in the Bible. There are about 15 flowers or tree blossoms mentioned. The first passage I thought of was *Isaiah 40:8*: "Grass withers, flowers fade, but the word of our God holds good for ever." Likewise in *Psalm 103: 15-17*, "As for humans ... their flowering is like wild flowers. For the wind passes over them and they vanish... But the steadfast love of Yahweh lasts from far distant time into times to come..." Both these poems use flower imagery to contrast the transitoriness of created life with the word and love of God.

There are also plant images which convey the opposite: *1 Peter 1:22-25* quotes *Isaiah 6:8* "flowers fade", but the letter is actually about being born anew, and this new birth is through the living and enduring word of God is of imperishable *seed*!

The Old Testament book where flowers are presented most positively is *Song of Songs* (*2:8-17*). When the poet sings of the winter being past and *flowers* appearing on the earth, he refers to spring – when the figs begin to ripen and the vines blossom and exude fragrance. It is also the time for the lover to call to his beloved: "Arise my love, my beautiful one, and come away" (*v.13*). Here the *Song of Songs* associates flowers with the love of people.

The New Testament

The best-known reference is Jesus' saying: "Consider how the wild lilies grow; they don't work hard and they don't spin either. Yet, believe me, not even Solomon in all his glory had clothes like these" (*Mt. 6:28-29*). Some scholars think the flower here is the lotus, a showy flower – not the lily. Such showiness would certainly fit Jesus' meaning that these wild flowers surpass even Solomon's glory.

Jesus' reference to the showy flowers is to provide a contrast with the way we worry about many things. Some of it we cannot help, but it can become pervasive and dominate our lives to the exclusion of what is really necessary.

This links with our understanding of Jesus' saying that God clothes the plants of the field (*v. 30*). We are a part of natural creation. Coming immediately before God clothing the plants is the description of the lilies that 'neither toil nor spin' but yet grow. It is thus closely connected with God's creation that creatures are and do what they are meant to do and be. The lovers in *Song of Songs* are a human example of this: they are not worried; they express what they are; they are in love. Flowers grow and show beauty, contrasting with human worry.

What Jesus' words imply is that seeking the Kingdom of God is the most essential aspect of being and becoming human. The illustration of God's being with the flowers in the most intimate way, clothing them, suggests that the Kingdom of God is God's presence with us too, certainly in our worries, but transcending them.

At a time when many people see the Bible, Judaism and Christianity expressing only anger and violence, it is a challenge to show that the Bible also expresses love through creation. Flowers (not weapons) stimulate people to receive all that is good in the world.

Maurice Andrew

# of Spring

After my son's birth I went back to work too soon – preferring exhaustion to even imagined sniggers about having another child on the DPB. Everything seemed fine for a year, and then the world turned grey. There was no colour, no happiness, and no pleasure anywhere. Everything was the colour of dirty dishwater.

The doctor called it depression and gave me pills. Prayer seemed pointless. But one day a very wise woman asked me simply where I did see colour. I told her I could imagine a red geranium. 'Then go out of the church and into the garden,' she said. And I planted six red geraniums against the standard Housing New Zealand green fence, and later some pansies and some red silverbeet.

The world regained colour, starting with the eyes of my children, and I don't have so much time now for the garden. But recovery from mental illness for me will always be as red as a geranium against a green fence.

Cecilia

It would be true to say that I feel closer to God in the garden than in a church.

It's not that I pray exactly, it's more the feeling of thankfulness. God didn't have to give us colours or flowers or the love and loyalty of animals.

But there's something new every time you go out there – a flower that's blossomed, a combination of colours, the amazing diversity of colour and design, all the shades of green. There's the scents, the shadows, the way the bigger trees protect the birds and the plants underneath them. There's peace in a garden.

I feel closest to God and nature the way St Francis knew them – the sharing, non-aggressive, non-competitive, enjoying beauty and seeing the goodness in all things, even retarded children. When things go wrong, the garden lifts my spirits.

Pat Biggs

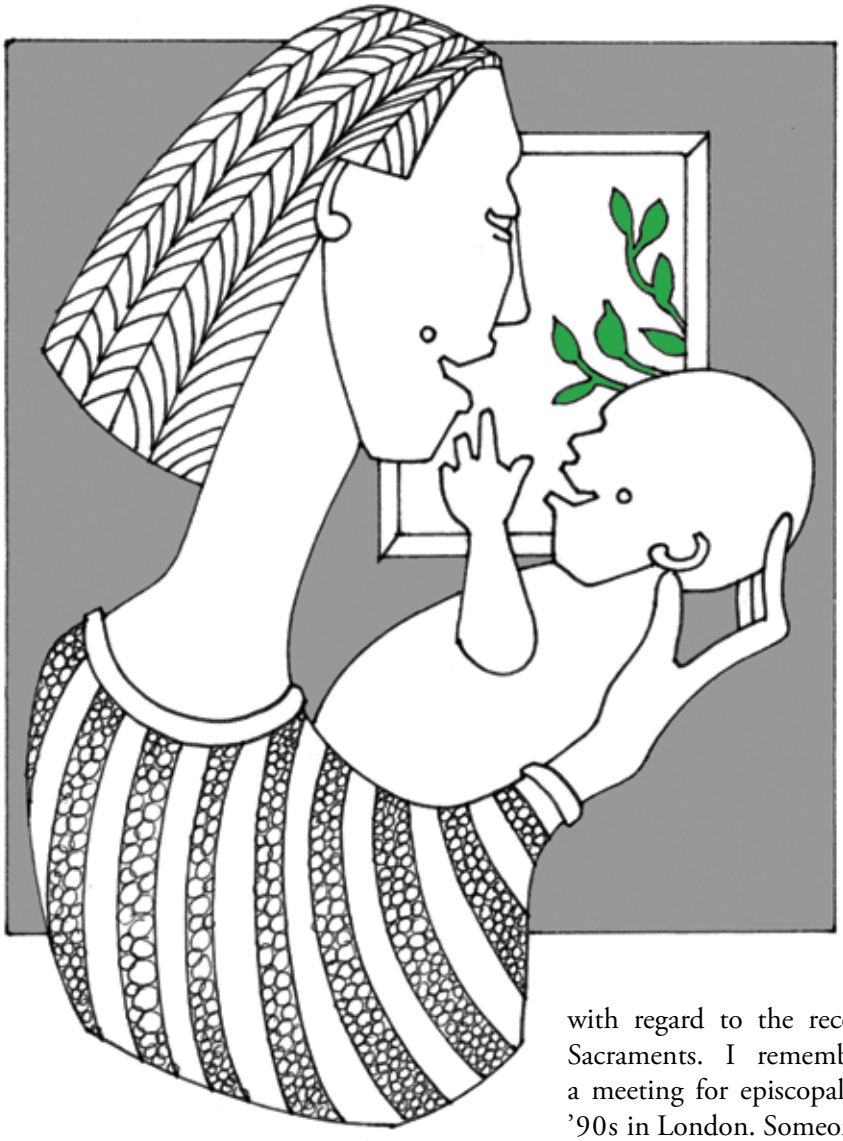
Be a gardener.
Dig a ditch,
Toil and sweat,
And turn the earth upside down,
And seek the dampness,
And water the plants in time.

Continue this labour,
And make sweet floods to run,
And noble and abundant fruits to spring.

Take this food and drink
And carry it to God as your true worship.

Julian of Norwich
(14th Century)

(Tui Motu *wishes to express thanks once again to* Caritas Aotearoa *for providing these resources for Social Justice Week)*



A hard line won't do

Daniel O'Leary

Parish priests of great experience understand church teaching. But fragile people need compassion rather than restrictions placed on God's unconditional love

A few years ago a shy young couple from a 'good Catholic family' in the parish asked to get married in church. I had never seen them at Mass and so I did not immediately agree to their request, and suggested further meetings. Maybe it was the tone of my voice, or maybe they were not very keen in the first place, but the outcome was that I never saw them again. I did hear some subsequent comments about the parish priest being 'a hard man'. That still hurts. I regret taking the stance I did. Even though the vast majority of the priests with whom I shared this moment have wholeheartedly agreed with me, I now know, in my heart, that I was wrong.

In my travels since then, I have listened to a great number of bruised Catholics who find it difficult to understand the 'hard line' that so many of us priests take, especially with regard to the reception of the Sacraments. I remember attending a meeting for episcopal vicars in the '90s in London. Someone suggested a wider use of general absolution and a more generous attitude towards many of those no longer allowed to receive Holy Communion. "Good God!" one of those present exclaimed, "if we go down that road our churches will be crammed with sinners every Sunday morning!"

Many older priests regret, like I do, the times that we have taken the tough option with fragile parishioners. To be sure, we do need some kind of guidelines so that our communities can stay in line with the vision of Jesus. And we do look for agreed diocesan policies and procedures about pastoral practice from time to time.

But what the more experienced pastors will now freely admit – especially those who are in their later decades and who are risking the inner, spiritual journey into their own soul – is that they have stopped sticking to the party line when that line is less than compassionate. They regret the times they have placed restrictions on the unconditional love of God. They no longer shrink divine mercy to the size of their own timidity and fear. God's extravagant compassion reaches well beyond the boundaries and categories of prescribed behaviour, of our knowledge and certainties.

The bishops of England and Wales, at one of their meetings a few years ago in the north of England, admitted in their *Lakes Meditation* that they were probably excluding from the Eucharist the very sinners to whom Jesus would have given pride of place. Am I right in thinking that much of the presentation of our faith in recent decades, the general tone of many Vatican curial documents, even the weekly thrust of many of our homilies and catechetical content, are still tinged, if not deeply coloured, by an attitude of admonition and caution? "The dangers of life are many, and safety is one of them," wrote Goethe.

My abiding concern is about the loss of the reassuring invitation of a beckoning God, as revealed so unambiguously in

the life of Jesus. Jesus was so good at simply walking with people without judging them, liberating people without making them dependent, forgiving people unconditionally while saving their embarrassment. He set out only to bless people with their own divine power.

Above all, the delight of Our Saviour was, as Emily Dickinson put it, "to dwell in the potential of human beings". This is what he was doing on the road to Emmaus. He was clarifying for his faithful friends what they already half knew. He didn't berate them for their slowness, but because he loved them he was prepared to wait for their hearts to understand.

Like all true teachers, he could recognise the butterfly in a caterpillar, the eagle in an egg and the saint in a sinful human being. And, as the sun coaxes open the petals of the daisy on a spring morning, so too the love of Jesus reached into the uncertain hearts of those who found themselves drawn to him.

There is a story about a flower that blooms only in the dark. Not only is this unexpected moment unseen; the aroma, too, is seemingly wasted in the night air. The light of God in our hearts is something similar – shining within our darkest night and our besetting sins. Not many are aware of this extraordinary, paradoxical epiphany. It was the way of Jesus to remember this divine truth and instead of condemning, blaming and judging, his gentleness touched every heart that lay open to him.

Knowing his own temptations and emotions, he understood those of others. Familiar, through contemplation, with the labyrinth of contradictions in his own soul, he saw accurately into the mysteries of the human heart. And, in the same manner, without enough silence in our own deepest selves, we ministers of the Church will continue to alienate people by too much projected control and too little graced trust.

What the Churches need to recover is the tenderness of Jesus. This only comes, as the poet Roethke said, "from long looking". We would do well to reflect on how patiently a mother entices out the humanity and the personality of her baby. Hans Urs von Balthasar, theologian of beauty, wrote: "After a mother has smiled for a long time at her child, the child will begin to smile back. She has awakened love in its heart, and in this awakening love, she awakens also recognition."

And Rilke said that an infant's journey into human awareness depended on the beckoning, beguiling voice of the mother, easing the child into selfhood, lessening the shadows of the abyss that trap us in inarticulate darkness. You could hardly say, in light of this reality, that the mother takes "the hard line" with her baby. Yet Mother Church, with her children, too often does.

To return to my opening confession of tough pastoral practice, I hardly encountered that young and loving couple as a mother would her baby. I do not think it makes me soft or sentimental to hold that, as heralds of the Gospel, lay and clerical, we now need to recover that mother tongue, that coaxing, patient and captivating presence with which our own mothers, and before that Jesus, made us aware of our own amazing mystery.

We live in a terrifying world. There is so much fear and darkness all around us. Too often we feel small and powerless. In our heart of hearts, when we are alone at night, when we let down the masks, the front, the brave smile, what we long for is not the precise language of official Church-speak; we yearn for the warmth, the loving eyes and the open arms of our mother. As anyone who is familiar with the emotions of those who feel alienated in hospices, neglected in residential homes and frightened in our hospitals knows, what we all want, at the end of the day, is to be welcomed home. ■

Daniel O'Leary is parish priest of St Wilfrid's, Ripon, North Yorkshire

Ignatian Imaginative Prayer

Patricia Kane

Christian Life Community (CLC) is grounded in the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. It is one of the oldest lay organisations in the Catholic Church, present in over 60 countries.

Small groups meet regularly using Scripture and the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius for prayer. Meetings are structured on the process used in the Exercises. The members experience, reflect, judge and decide in a cylic process, not unlike the see-judge-act of Catholic Action.

2006 is a year of Jubilee for the Ignatian family – 450 years since the death of St Ignatius. In Australia and New Zealand, we are celebrating by experiencing the Spiritual Experiences in a communal form. We will spend around nine weeks on the Spiritual Exercises, praying a minimum of one hour, three times a week, plus an optional three further hours to deepen our prayer, and meeting weekly in a guided group to share on the insights and graces received.

Below is an example of an Ignatian meditation.

Background.

* In all prayer, our main work is in preparation; the prayer itself can be left to God.

* We all have imagination, which we can use to meet Jesus just as his friends did 2000 years ago. Time and space are not barriers.

* God can be very active in us through images and symbols produced in our imagination. God uses them to heal, enlighten, forgive, energise, or direct us.

* It is good to identify with the people who met Jesus, to meet him as they did.

* We can exercise a sort of discernment about what is happening in our prayer.

When praying this way, it is good to hear what is said, and also to hear how it is said, and to 'sense' the accompanying facial expression. We try to identify with how the gospel characters are feeling. Understanding their fears, hopes, desires, and worries makes the event real to us. We don't just think about the Gospel story; we experience it, at least to some degree. (Tony Horan sj, 2005)

I begin my prayer period:

I find a comfortable position, relaxed, not tense.

I still my body and mind and begin to centre my whole person.

I invite God into a quiet mind and heart.

I pray: 'teach me, Lord, to listen'.

I ask for the grace to meet Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit.

I choose to meditate, for example, on ***Luke 19:1-10*** – the story of Zaccheus. I read it over several times. Jesus has just entered Jericho. A crowd gathers, eager to see and hear him. Zaccheus is a hated tax-collector. "He is anxious to see what kind of man Jesus is." Perhaps he has heard that one of Jesus' closest disciples was a tax-collector. What do I suppose he is feeling?

I put myself in the scene. The ideal is for the incident to happen to me. This time I will be Zaccheus.

It's a hot day in Jericho, as usual. I am tired, on my way home, when I see a crowd approaching. Could it be Jesus of Nazareth? I have a strong urge to see him myself. Everyone's talking about him – the people he has healed, the Pharisees he has upset. I don't have much time for that lot myself... but I'm so short and the crowd is thick around him.

Wait, I'll climb the tree up ahead and see him that way, on the quiet. I am just in position when, oh horrors, he stops, looks up and says to me: 'Come down, quick, I want to eat at your place today'. I'll swear there is a twinkle in his eye. Well, I come down quicker than I went up, but I can hear the mutterings all round me. I'm not popular, you see. Jesus is still looking at me – such a look, it goes right through me.

So I stand my ground and say: 'Look, Lord, I'm giving half my possessions to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I'm giving it back fourfold!' It just comes out, I can't help it, not with that look of his. Suddenly, I feel so joyful and light! He says something about coming to save the lost. Well, that's how I feel – safe!

I close my prayer by opening my heart to Jesus, sharing anything that has happened to me through being with him in this gospel event.

I feel very close to you, Jesus, when you speak to me directly. I feel challenged in my way of life. Are you asking me to give something back to those I have wronged, as Zaccheus did? For me it won't be money, but something more personal. Do I take control of others? Take decisions without listening to their needs? Hoard my time?

Afterwards. I reflect on what happened, and I make notes for my journey with Christ.

Jesuit website: www.sacredspace.ie/

A Mother's Journal . . .

"Why are you in Jibhi?" a friend asks six-year-old Sharhirah.

"Oh, 'cos Mum and Dad were missing living in India and they want us to learn Hindi," Shar replies and carries on with her finger knitting.

Moving countries, in fact continents, is not a light undertaking with three small children. As we wonder whether to stay another year, our children and their needs come at the top of the list for consideration.

They're doing OK here we think. The three of them tolerate dhal and rice for lunch every day. Correspondence school is fine, we get our work finished by lunchtime. Rohan joins other small boys in chasing utes loaded with cabbages as they go down the road, running and tripping through the puddles until they are left far behind. Shanti helped our housemate Kanta sorting stones from the moong beans this afternoon. Shar can read and write the Hindi alphabet.

The girls miss their Christchurch school though, and talk about teachers and activities there often. Taking them to the Hindi medium school in the afternoons for an hour is fairly hard work. "Who invented stupid uniforms? Why do all the children keep asking us our names, I've told them a hundred times?" In their goodnight prayers the children say, "Thank you that we live in such a nice place and that we can see monkeys and snakes and elephants."

We ask Shanti: "How would you feel about another year in Jibhi?"

"Oh, that'd be alright" and she's back to the *Famous Five* book.

I wonder, as I have done a hundred times before. How do I balance up some ill-defined sense of call to work in less resourced places with my children's needs? Is my duty as a parent to give my children every possible chance to succeed in life? Whose definition of success do I use? Am I disadvantaging them for the future?

Certainly we had to leave a beloved gymnastics competition squad last year. Living in rural India is a death knell for a gymnastic career. Actually there are also no dance lessons, no piano teachers, no drama schools, no Brownies, no Sunday Schools, and no *Mainly Music* groups – unless we make it happen ourselves.

And then these thoughts seem so petty when I read the Gospels and the Sermon on the Mount. Our kids missing out on gymnastics training doesn't seem even to warrant talking about with God. I haven't even started on the Sermon on the Mount scoreboard. Especially when it comes to giving away my first and second coats. During last week's rain shower someone borrowed my rain jacket and I definitely plan to ask for it back. I rationalise that the Gospels don't actually deal with the complexities of life in the 21st century. I mean, I need a raincoat. Its essential for me. I can't use an umbrella on a bike.

Am I seeing but not perceiving? Hearing but not understanding? How do I live God's will on earth as in heaven. Or just know and do God's will a little bit even?

It's all a lot easier for some of the more fundamentalist missionary types around here. They are sure they are in the centre of God's will and doing exactly what He wants (and there's no doubt that God is a He either!).One day it may become clearer to me. In the meantime I guess I just creep along the track, feeling the way through the mist. I think that God our Mother-Father-Sister-Brother is with us on this foggy hillside. And that's about all I can be sure of. And I guess we'll stick around here in Himachal Pradesh a while longer. At least until I get my raincoat back.

I like Luenig's prayer pinned up beside the desk:

"God bless the lost, the confused, the unsure, the bewildered, the puzzled, the mystified, the baffled, and the perplexed. Amen"

Kaaren Mathias

Kaaren Mathias is a mother of three living and working in a village in Himachal Pradesh. She is focussed on keeping her kids happy, improving public health and enjoying the beautiful surroundings

Religion Kills!

John Bruerton looks out over a church of conflicting theologies. He asks: should Christians engage with the world – or not?

Several days after the shattering events of September 11, 2001, graffiti ***Religion Kills!*** appeared on the wall of a theological college in Montreal. Is religious conflict accidental or coincidental? Can it be traced to core beliefs, careless assumptions about the religion itself or a simplistic reading of the Scriptures?

A religious or secular group that believes it is in possession of the truth has the most deadly weapon of any warfare: the sense of its own superiority over the 'contaminated and decadent' and, therefore a mandate to mastery. The Puritans of Cromwellian England and the Red Guards in Communist China were such groups as they roamed the towns and cities in organised crusades of intimidation, iconoclasm and malice. Terrorists and suicide bombers, in the Middle East, are the new and more recent expression of fundamentalist religion.

Evangelicals and Liberals

The evangelical wing in many New Zealand denominations is retreating into the zone of private religion, a religion of the soul, of personal morals and of the home. They propose salvation by observance and conformity and a restricted reading of the Scriptures. While all knowledge, including theology, is provisional and fallible, it is reliable for living provided we engage constantly and widely with people and with tradition, Scripture and scholarship. Conversation and contemplation are critical.

We see, in America for example, the power and determination of the Religious Right to be the spiritual guarantor and cultic legitimator of the Republican Party and the President, to sacralise society. Many evangelicals are critical of 'liberals' who can't differentiate between Gospel and culture. Yet culture and society is where God is incarnated, where God is crucified and where humanity is crucified. Liberals engage with the world because the object of God's love is the world. And such engagement, such obedience, said Bonhoeffer, is "the cost of discipleship".

For over 1500 years Christendom has been a privileged movement as it colluded with state power; nevertheless it has continued to sing the *Magnificat.*

Hannah and Mary's radical revision of the priorities of this world spells out the abundant generosity and compassion of God in a world that still believes there is not enough of God's abundance to be shared around.

Religious faith in context

There is conspicuous resistance among Protestant conservatives to the historical-critical method of theological study and the notion of theological contextuality, on the grounds of capitulation to relativism and syncretism or allowing the world to set the Christian agenda. But if the Christian message is intended for the world and if it is to be rendered in language and action that in any genuine manner address real issues, then the specificity of the context must be allowed to play a vital role in the theological reflection that serious Christian obedience and wisdom presuppose.

There is no universal abstract or perennial theology despite our wish for God and the church to provide it. Keep in mind that any contextual theology is not full and final. It has time and place applications, relevance and limitations – liberationist, feminist, peace, bi-culturalism, environmentalist etc.

There is particular reluctance and fear within the evangelical camp to engage with their contemporary context, to address the great variety of worldly contexts and significant national issues e.g. the cultural consequences of the immigration of Asian and Middle Eastern peoples to New Zealand. When was the last meeting of such people held to discuss the high incidence of infanticide in New Zealand and domestic violence, poverty and dysfunctional families in Christchurch? In a public meeting recently, several male clergy fretted over a Sanskrit phrase on an altar cloth in the Christchurch cathedral. (It was a catalyst for bigger political issues.) Isn't it sad that aesthetic values and artistic innovation and creativity is apparently beyond male comprehension and conversation; that beauty, joy, music, poetry, drama and dance cannot be responses to divinity and part of our Christian pilgrimage?

What the Scriptures say to us

John R W Stott was the outstanding Anglican evangelical author, scholar, preacher, teacher and missioner of the 20th century. He was insistent on maintaining a clear distinction between fundamentalism, with its *"bigoted rejection of all Biblical criticism... and an excessively literalist interpretation of Scripture"*, and the traditional

conservative view of Scripture which ascribes *"to the Scriptures no meaner an authority than did our Lord and his disciples..."* Stott was also of the view that the results of evangelism should include *"responsible service in the world."*

His Christian ministry was delivered with a sense of boldness and intellectual thoroughness, yet always with humility and respect, love and compassion for people and the Anglican way. Theology is never done in a vacuum or behind confessional barriers to the messy, ambiguous, unsettled and uncertain world culture all around us.

It is timely to recall that Yahwism (belief in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) in the Old Testament was deeply enmeshed and shaped by material reality e.g. demography, technology and food supply. Their theological articulation was intimately linked with lived reality, especially the reality of power (public and private), the ideology and morality of power, the security and maintenance of power, and the legitimacy of power. There were no 'innocent' texts or 'innocent' people above the fray and traffic of social intercourse. The Jews and their Scriptures were equally aware of the holy will and holy purpose and promise that in hidden and open ways were at work in those power structures (religious, economic and political.) Every reading was partisan and continually in dispute.

The ancient Jewish faith community was a context of confession, conflict and risk. There is much that is wild, incongruous, polyphonic and untamed about the theological witness of the Old Testament that Church theology, with its Greek mode of rational thought cannot face. The Old Testament has its own voices quite apart from established church interpretations. And how something was said (its genre) was as crucial and definitive as what was said i.e. the artistic intentionality. We need to allow the text to reveal itself to the readers and listeners.

Retreat into delusions of certainty

Within the human heart there is a very real yearning for safety, permanency, charity, settlement and certitude in matters of religion when we are surrounded by so much social change in New Zealand – human failure, greed, violence and faithless relationships. There is a very serious temptation for Christian leaders and believers in such times, however, to give up on the Pauline spirituality of faith, hope and love and reliance on the Trinitarian God in favour of more immediate results through sight, finality and power.

This is how the modern secular world operates and measures its success, but *Matthew* and *Luke* record that these were the very temptations that Jesus rejected at the beginning of his ministry, for they betrayed his Sonship and mission. The temptation to power is seemingly irresistible; it seems easier to *be* God than to love God, to control people than to love them, to own life than to love it.

When the church, or factions within it, is tempted to follow suit it leads to a limited reading of the Scriptures, it elevates law over grace, it sidelines the reality and hiddenness and movement of the holy Spirit, and it devalues all scholarship and our freedom to dialogue with contemporary society on big questions – because we have the 'answers' already!

It is very close to heresy when factions cut corners and impose restrictions because they don't trust God to work things out in God's way or in God's time. A theology or ideology or mindset of triumphalism isn't the way of Jesus of Nazareth or the fruits of the Spirit or the way of the Kingdom of God. Like evangelical communism and capitalism, such triumphalism can only produce winners and losers – and enormous tragedy and bloodshed.

Over centuries Christians, with the assistance of state power, have committed enormous injustice and crimes against one another and Jews and Moslems (and vice versa). They apparently 'forgot' that Jesus was crucified by religious people. Such fundamentalist communities live in intellectually and psychologically comfortable insulation from the frightening and chaotic mishmash of daily and global existence.

Conclusion

Such theological triumphalism must change. It is vital for the peace of the world, and relationships within the church that, in defiance of all that seeks to divide us, we hold firmly to a faith that not only does not hate and kill but opens the community up to life-enhancing communion with others of our kind and of other kind as well.

"...putting away all falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another... Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love..."

(Ephesians 4:25, 5:1)

John Bruerton is an Anglican layman with a strong desire for local churches to promote regular theological reflection on our everyday realities

Launch out into the deep

Glynn Cardy

Archbishop Helder Camara once wrote: *Pilgrim: when your ship, long moored in harbour, gives you the illusion of being a house; when your ship begins to put down roots in the stagnant water by the quay: put out to sea! Save your boat's journeying soul, and your own pilgrim soul, cost what it may.*

There are some churches that resemble houses, and some that resemble ships. One well-known hymn, *Christ is Made the Sure Foundation*, suggests the Church is like a house and Christ the cornerstone. With sure biblical foundations the Church will be rock-solid, able to withstand the storms of change and doubt.

If one considers the Church to be more like a ship than a house, however, then the Bible ceases to be a brick to fortify your structure but is spiritual food for the journey. The traditions of the Church cease to be rules to keep but helpful hints to guide. God too changes.

Much of the current Anglican debate is 'in house'. It's a debate between those who want to protect the structure, strengthen the walls, and keep foreign winds and doctrines out, and those who want to open the windows and doors to the world and be prepared to change time-honoured methods and doctrines in order to do so. The debate about homosexual clergy and blessings, for example, is largely about how accommodating can the Church be without compromising its foundations.

Yet those of us who are pilgrim sailors tire of this debate, not because the issues are unimportant, but because the model is not true to our experience of God, faith, and community. A house doesn't move. It isn't meant to. The model assumes that the land won't move either. It is essentially a static model, supportive of the illusion of an unchanging past and a predictable future.

The house God is at best a benevolent host who opens the gates to strangers, welcomes them, and dines with them. God may accommodate the strangers' suggestions about rearranging the furniture, even knocking a hole in a wall, but the basic structure will remain unchanged. For God in this model is not only the host but also the landlord.

Compare this with the God who is the wind in our sails and the beat in our hearts. The ship God is less interested in structure and hospitality than in those excluded from structure and hospitality. Change is not a threat, inconvenience, or prescription, but part of the divine nature. God is the energy of transformative love, and refuses to be tamed.

The house Church and the ship Church have very different attitudes to leaks. Leaks can be thought of as the things that go wrong, the plans that don't quite work out, and the hurt people who distribute their hurt around. In a house a leak needs urgent attention. It drips on your head and can rot your walls. It needs to be repaired before your dinner guests arrive. On a ship, however, a leak is expected. Bilge pumps are the norm. The ship doesn't stop to attend to them, unless they are very serious. Leaks are part of sailing.

Yet the biggest difference between the two models of Church and God is risk. The house, even an open house, speaks of security, stability, and safety. The occupants know where they are, what to expect, and even whom they might meet at the door. The ship, on the other hand, is heading out into unknown waters. The familiar towns and headlands are no longer there. The good old ways become more irrelevant day by day. God, faith, and community have or will change.

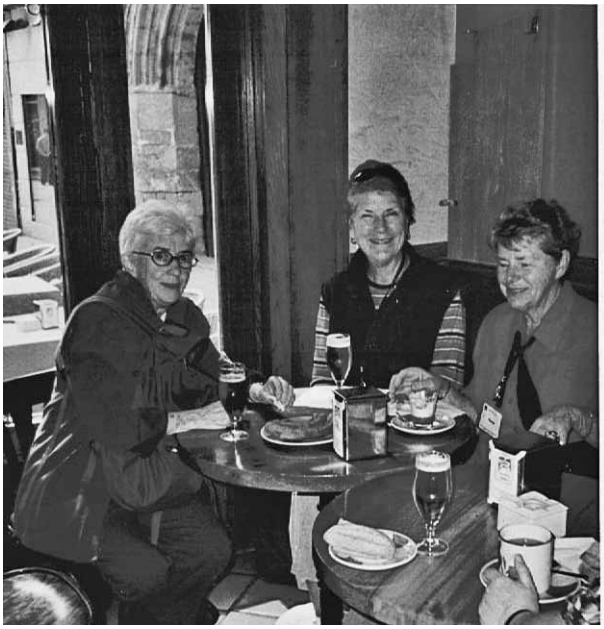
I belong to an Auckland church committed to sailing. We are looking to the horizon and the horizon is looking at us. Some 4,000 new and unique visitors come each month. Some are looking for a house and its God, but not many. Most are looking for a different hope, a different way of faith that includes their difference, and a God who is boundless. And that's what we offer. ■

Glynn Cardy is parish priest of St-Mathews-in-the-City, Auckland
www.stmatthews.org.nz

A Song on the Journey

. . . Women in the Footsteps of Dominic

Danielle Melton



Cecily Sheehy, Bernie Cheyne and Marie Winders

Yes, it all began in a pub. Well, a little Spanish café in Caluerega, northern Spain, Dominic's country actually, the town of his birth. I was there with the other 41 pilgrims, journeying in Dominic's footsteps to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Dominican Order.

The café was not crowded when we arrived after a day exploring Caluerega; just a few people gathered like us for a quiet drink at the end of the day. Which was what we had done too – wanting to find a quiet spot with a drink, to help Cec write the words she needed to compose a new song for our pilgrimage, and what better place to do it than in a café over a glass of smooth Spanish sangria?

A table in a corner was chosen and after the locals had checked us out, we settled down to work. Suddenly the door creaked open again and a tiny, elderly leprechaun of a Spanish man came in. He ordered his drink with a slice of ham off a haunch hanging there over the counter, and shuffled off to another table behind us. With one of the others I was facing him and, fascinated by his cap but more so by the lined, gap-toothed smile he beamed in our direction, I smiled in return and soon we were all smiling and nodding at him.

Cec, poised over her pen and paper, seemed to fascinate him most of all, for he beamed his most radiant gummy grin at her and raised his glass to her before he drank. He really was quaint; the gnarled hands holding the glass or pulling bits off the ham, the old black coat with deep pockets, the beret on the sparse hair, but above all the beatific, twinkling smile. As we struggled with the words for the hymn, his presence became more powerful and we were distracted by his continually grinning at us. Perhaps it was the wine too, for soon we were overcome with laughter.

Cec, aware that she was the object of his fascination, eventually got up, went over, sat down with him and began to practice her Spanish. There they were, two animated people smiling and communicating with hands flying and heads nodding. Both tiny yet vital and enthusiastic, as they conversed and drank their wine.

How typically Dominican was that experience – it all began for Dominic in a pub too – conversing, sharing wisdom and no doubt laughter, for he was such a joyous person. We did get the hymn words written and they are brilliant; I have sung them since with great joy and with the memory of that delightful end-of-day experience.

Strange, it all began for me in a pub too. Must be something about pubs – and inns. ■

Sing of Leaders through the Ages

Sing of leaders through the ages,
prophets in their time and place,
freeing people from the harness
of a narrow binding space.

Sing of Dominic, joyful friar
walking bravely through the land,
giving us a torch of freedom,
gospel values to defend.

Star of truth, he went before us,
questing God, on foot he strode,
honest preacher, broad his vision,
sharing wisdom on the road.

As a person for all seasons
reaching out to honour life,
friend of Francis, surely loving
all the creatures of the earth.

Catherine, vested with desire,
prayed to God, the Living Truth,
"Clothe me, clothe me in yourself
clothe me Great Eternal Truth".

Catherine shows by her example
in this world of great unease,
"search within the cell of silence,
where the soul will find its peace".

Catherine, fearless, full of courage
facing bravely Prince and Pope,
throwing down the sacred challenge
"Give the people peace and hope".

As we journey now together,
giving praise to saints of old,
so we sing our own true story
to create a better world.

Words: Cecily Sheehy, O.P.
Music: Stuttgart: adapted from a melody in C F Witt's 'Harmonia Sacra' Gotha 1715

The cure of the blind man, Bartimaeus

Mark 10:46-52

Susan Smith

Mark 10 is a very busy chapter. It opens with the Pharisees aggressively questioning Jesus about divorce, and once again they lose the argument; the disciples also argue with Jesus who is "wasting time" on little children; the rich young man rejects Jesus' invitation to become a disciple; Peter, on behalf of the Twelve wants to know what their reward will be for following Jesus; and, finally after Jesus has prophesied that soon he will be condemned to death, James and John come to ask if they can have a seat at right hand of Jesus when he reaches his kingdom. The others are angry with the brothers, not so much for asking, but for excluding them. Jesus must have been wondering what the point of it all was!! But all is not lost. The chapter concludes with the story of Bartimaeus, the blind beggar who comes to Jesus when he reaches Jericho on his way to Jerusalem where he will suffer and die.

The crowd attempts to silence Bartimaeus' cries for help, but he ignores the crowd's overtures to be silent. Jesus affirms his faith, heals him, and Bartimaeus responds by immediately following him on the way to Jerusalem. His behavior contrasts sharply with that of the rich man who would not follow Jesus, and with the fear, hesitation and questions of the disciples. Bartimaeus' faith indicates the success of Jesus' ministry, despite the voices of opposition and the misunderstanding of those closest to Jesus.

From *Mark 2:6* onwards the religious leaders – priests and Pharisees – have been in conflict with Jesus. They have seen his miracles, they have witnessed the feeding of the multitudes in the desert, have heard his teaching, have seen his fellowship with the poor, the sinners and tax collectors. None of this persuades them that Jesus of Nazareth is truly from God. They see but they do not see, whereas the blind man does not see but sees. The first four disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John, along with the rest of the Twelve are initially enthusiastic but as the gospel draws to its conclusion, their enthusiasm disappears. Bartimaeus provides one of the few positive responses to Jesus, a response predicated on his faith, even before his miraculous cure.

Mark 10 is a chapter that invites us to reflect on our lives – are we like the Pharisees, self-righteous and seeking to discredit the other, or like Bartimaeus, a believer who wants to follow Jesus "on the way" to Jerusalem? ■

Dr Susan Smith is a Mission sister who teaches Biblical Studies at the School of Theology, University of Auckland

Book on Eucharist points the way ahead

Nourished by Eucharist
Edited Helen Bergin & Susan Smith
Accent Publications
Review: Ron Sharp

Hurray! After 160 years New Zealand has its own theology appearing in print. Earlier was *Land and Place* and now *Nourished by Eucharist* drawing on the creativity and expertise of our own national Catholic Church thinkers and doers. We were founded under the influence of French and grew up under Irish clergy and Religious. Our education was with Latin, British and American curricula and we even have a Canadian Lectionary. Along with *Tui Motu*, of course, now, at last, through the discernment of Helen Bergin and Susan Smith in choosing the themes and writers and the venture of *Accent Publications*, we have come of age as local Church. Congratulations to all the contributors for their special and often courageous messages to our Church of New Zealand.

What a pity that our Bishops had not seen this monumental work on the Eucharist before adapting the Welsh programme for *Worshipping Under Southern Skies*! All the resources are here – theologians, biblical scholars, liturgists and educationalists.

"Eucharist is about people eating food thankfully" says Neil Darragh, so unleashing a whole series of innovative and refreshing insights into participating in and doing Eucharist in each essay. All the aspects of Eucharist are explored: history, hospitality, wisdom, friendship, God and Jesus, love of presence through shared meals, re-membering, sacrifice, Jesus and our bodies given, mystery and surprise, community as Christ, appropriate music, sent to do social justice, tensions and diversity at the table, absence of youth, leadership and other issues to be faced in parishes without resident priests, the remarried divorced, service. Each essay was worthy of a review on its own.

Breaking through for this reader was the difference in the approach of the women writers. There was a natural melding of body and spirit, nature and divine, Jesus and the Christian body today: a beautiful "whole" leapt out.

One disappointing aspect was the expectation from reading the subtitle "Whangaia ki te Taro o te Ora" of more Maori perspectives, as in *Land and Place*; given their display of hospitality and their feeding of the thousands with koha at their Queen's tangi.

What do you think of the idea of the Eucharistic ministers receiving communion after the people as a sign of service?

Every parish and school should get a copy of this resource for their liturgy committee and DRS to share with their parish and staff. The whole book is stimulating and challenging. It is an excellent guide that leaves future development open. ■

Talking with the 'enemy'

Interfaith Dialogue: A Catholic View
Michael L. Fitzgerald & John Borelli
Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006
Review: Susan Smith

Interfaith Dialogue is a comprehensive survey of post-Vatican II developments regarding inter-faith relations with Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism. English-born Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald, a Missionary of Africa, has had a distinguished Vatican career, most recently as president of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. In February 2006 Pope Benedict XVI appointed him as papal nuncio to Egypt, a move that some Vatican observers believed was due to Fitzgerald's presumed soft policy toward Islam, and the stronger line adopted by Benedict and more recently by Cardinal Walter Kasper. No one doubts that he is the right man for a difficult job, and as I write this at the height of the Israeli-Hezbollah war, his work will not be easy.

Co-author American John Borelli has served as Associate Director for the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The section *Dialogue in General* understands inter-religious dialogue as integral to the mission of the church, and not as a task restricted to theologians and church leaders. The authors praise John Paul II's effort to promote inter-religious dialogue, and believe that this has helped facilitate Catholic awareness about its importance. There is a clear and concise explanation of the four forms of dialogue: dialogue of life in which all of us can engage through our charity and service towards our neighbour; dialogue of action in which we collaborate with others for the development and liberation of all people; dialogue of theological exchange in which specialists engage with one another in order to deepen their appreciation of the other's religious traditions; and the dialogue of religious experience in which persons, deeply rooted in their own traditions, share their spiritual insights with the other in a spirit of mutuality. Both authors are quite clear that inter-religious dialogue is more than an extra to be added on to ecclesial duties if there is time, and cite both church teaching and canon law to support their position.

Christian-Muslim Relations are covered in Part II, and given the challenges involved for inter-religious dialogue since 9/11, this section merits careful reading. Again most of the examples cited are Western European and North American. There is a helpful historical overview that explains the movement from identifying Muslims as heretics to understanding that they, like Christians, are heirs of the Hebrew tradition, although Fitzgerald is emphatic that Muslims do Christians a disservice when they refer to them as "people of the book." Christians are people committed to a person, Jesus Christ. Part II concludes with an illuminating chapter on Mary, noting that she is referred to more than any other woman in the Koran.

Part III, *Wider Horizons*, looks at the witness of the great monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and then at the phenomenon of modern religious fundamentalism. One of the problems facing those who believe in inter-religious dialogue is that people usually judge religion by its most extreme elements, the fundamentalists.

A particularly useful chapter is that treating of dialogue and spirituality where Catholic and Buddhist monks in the United States offer an important model of the dialogue of religious experience. Borelli believes that willingness to engage in such dialogue is an essential part of the contemporary monastic calling. There is a useful chapter on forgiveness and how it is understood in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The book concludes with short accounts of three men whom the authors identify as 'prophets of dialogue': French orientalist Louis Massignon (1883-1962), French Benedictine, Jules Monchanin (1895-1957), and Thomas Merton.

I have two minor criticisms. First, I would have appreciated knowing which author had written the different chapters. The two different styles do not suggest that many chapters were co-authored. Second, the book provides a good account of what has happened, but it does not offer an adequate theological explanation as to why it has happened.

This is an important book even in a country as 'down under' as New Zealand because the number of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists is increasing quite rapidly and we need to be able to respond positively to our changing society. There are do-able strategies in the different chapters that enable Catholics, lay and ordained, to see how to be active players in inter-religious dialogue. ■

A sure-footed leader

Basil Hume The monk cardinal
Anthony Howard
London: Headline Book Publishing, pb 2006.
Price: $38.98
Review: Simon Rae

It must be said at once that this is a truly outstanding biography. A warmly human man, Cardinal Hume was an attractive but by no means uncomplicated subject. The author, a distinguished journalist and political biographer who describes himself as a 'wistful agnostic', was an inspired choice by Hume's literary executors who hoped for an 'outsider's' view of a man whose whole life was spent in the church, as monk and archbishop. Howard was given access to all the records and had the cooperation of many who knew the Cardinal personally or in his official roles. He brings clarity to the complex business of being a modern archbishop in a church firmly but graciously reasserting its role in English life and also presents a lively and sympathetic picture of Benedictine monasticism that for all its centuries of English life and witness must be a great mystery to many moderns. A mark of his skill in this latter regard is the occasional, and always apt, use of uniquely Benedictine expressions – such as 'murmuring' for community dissent.

Basil Hume was one of the great spiritual teachers of the 20th century. Often recognised as a quintessential Englishman he in fact had a formidable French mother, a woman of great intelligence and spiritual balance who came to England as a young war bride with her husband, a returning army doctor, a Border Scot – later Sir William Hume. His mother kept the home actively bilingual, and Hume in later life was an accomplished linguist.

Basil (or George as he was before taking a new name as a monk) recognised his vocation early in life and he entered the Benedictine community at Ampleforth, where he had been educated, in 1941. Unusually for his time he was allowed to study at Oxford before going to Fribourg in Switzerland to study theology.

As monk Hume served as schoolmaster and later as a relatively young abbot. Some signs for the future may be seen in the way he guided his community through the post-Vatican II changes. Always open and far-sighted he embraced the renewal while taking great care that those of more traditional background were not forced into untenable positions. He was able to see what mattered and what did not – where he could not change people's minds he tried to make provision for their consciences.

As Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster, and head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, Basil Hume was at the centre of a process that saw the Catholic community reclaim a role of leadership in English life it had not had since the Reformation, and a re-identification of English Catholicism with English culture – the culture of all the English, not of a social elite, and that included for Hume football and fishing. There is no indication in the book of any specific attention to the Welsh part of Hume's responsibility.

As a churchman Hume displayed both loyalty to the teaching authority he was commissioned to safeguard and a willingness to state his own views, even where they differed – significantly on the Church's teaching concerning homosexual people (on which he wrote sharply to Rome i response to what he considered to be an unhelpfully judgemental attitude), on the right to at least discuss women's ordination to priesthood (in the last year of his life he was defending the right of an embattled nun to publish on this issue). When conscience and a very English sense of fairness indicated, he was active – relentlessly so – on political and social issues, but with a style very different from his two contemporaries, Cardinals Tomàs O'Fiaich of Armagh and Thomas Winning of Glasgow who often confronted the same issues.

Hume's sensitive response to the crisis faced by the Church of England after the decision to ordain women, when it was anticipated many Anglican clergy would seek to convert, dealt with the legal, personal and pastoral issues while maintaining a good relationship with the Anglican leadership (and with those priests who were 'murmuring' because some married Anglican clergy were allowed to serve as Catholic priests). Significantly, Rome had allowed him to handle this issue on his own authority.

Similarly sensitive pastoral responses to the assassination of Earl Mountbatten, the troubles of the Princess of Wales and the conversions of two members of the Royal Family won the confidence of the Queen and further cemented the new relationship between English Catholics and English society.

Howard is clear-sighted about the inevitable mistakes that occur in a long career, and discusses Hume's perhaps unsuspected human frailties – the 'short fuse' that was apparently well known in his community, and the occasional lapse of judgement (as in the schools issue in the Westminster archdiocese, where characteristically he was able to make speedy reconciliation after a strategic defeat). On the other hand, Howard seems unwilling to accept Hume's professed lack of ambition. Basically he argues, no one gets to be abbot while still young, and then Cardinal-Archbishop, without some serious ambition – he takes a youthful 'Pope or bust!' declaration too seriously. It belongs to the era when a young Dom Basil and confrères still played the occasion prank on their community.

Anthony Howard's 'outsider's' biography has sympathy and objectivity, clarity and warmth, and a realistic sense of Hume's rich but not infallible humanity. Those of us who have enjoyed the Cardinal's writings will value this official but quite remarkably independent account of his life and ministry that gives them a context, and libraries and study centres would find this a valuable resource not just for recent English Catholicism but for insight into the way in which a church community quietly but with the assurance of trusted leadership reclaimed a place of influence in its society. ■

9/11

Crosscurrents

John Honoré

"Nine-Eleven" has entered the English language as a metaphor" - Der Spiegel

The epochal event of the destruction of the twin towers in New York marked the beginning of a global conflict against terrorism, led by the United States. It also marked the suspension of many civil rights and sparked the declaration that America would launch a pre-emptive strike against anyone suspected of harbouring terrorists. It was a *carte blanche* for endless war. *Le Monde*, one month after 9/11, described it thus : "You enjoyed anti-communism? You're going to love anti-Islamism."

Five years after this attack, is the world more secure? 'Shock and awe' descended on Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden was sought 'dead or alive' and the countryside contiguous with Pakistan was laid waste. The incredible devastation wrought by airpower was followed by an occupation army in order to support a puppet government under Hamid Karzai whose power only extended to the boundaries of Kabul. Five years later, bin Laden is still at large, Afghanistan is in chaos, opium production is at an all time high, and the Taliban is back in the foothills.

The truth behind the invasion of Iraq is beginning to emerge. The deception, lies and the coercion of the people of America and the world at large, to support this illegal war is surfacing. The military postwar fiasco, the abuses of Abu Ghraib and the appalling loss of civilian life have created a bloody civil war in Iraq. Ordinary Americans have paid the price, in lives lost, in civil liberties curtailed, and they have reaped the opprobrium of most of the world, apart from the few remaining sycophants called the 'coalition of the willing'.

George W. Bush and his cabal of neoconservatives have lost the war against terrorism and al Qaeda. The entire region of the Middle East is now destabilised. There the terrorists reign and America's proxy, Israel, has been endangered by Hizbullah, Hamas and the Jihadists. Two things are obvious. Ground Zero will be commemorated sadly in years to come and George W. Bush could well bear the title of the worst President in the history of the United States.

Power corrupts – *absolutely!*

The attraction of politics is the power which elevates the professional politician above the everyday level of the ordinary people whom they represent. In order that good judgment and integrity be maintained, the politician has daily to overcome the vanity which seems to become a kind of occupational disease. Some succeed in maintaining their equilibrium and others develop a destructive hubris of self-importance whereby they believe anything is possible, indeed permissible, in order to maintain political power. Prime Minister Helen Clark, like Icarus, is flying too close to the sun.

Her initial support of Taito Phillip Field was solely for protecting Labour's political stronghold in Mangere. She ignored Field's obvious corruption of accepting cheap labour for services rendered. Surely this is the first case in New Zealand of such blatant abuse of political power.

When the Prime Minister rejected the Auditor-General's and the Solicitor-General's assessment that Labour's pledge card breached parliamentary rules and then told the country that she would introduce retrospective legislation to legitimise the affair, she plumbed the depths. This disregard for legal authorities guarding the public weal is contempt for the rule of law. This must be another first for New Zealand.

The opposition and the public have protested strongly and Helen Clark failed to prevent Trevor Mallard's tawdry sleaze campaign against Don Brash. No doubt the character assassination from both sides will continue to embarrass the country. Parliamentary debate has descended into a slanging match between parties seemingly made up of intellectual pygmies. The Prime Minister has succumbed to the politician's occupational disease and has insulted us all.

Papal gaffe

Pope Benedict's academic discourse, given at a German university last month, on faith and reason was an invitation to all the monotheistic faiths for a frank and sincere dialogue. He quoted a 14th century Christian Emperor who had criticised Muhammad for "spreading by the sword the faith he preached". The Islamic world has erupted in protest. The Pontiff was arguing for the renunciation of violence in the name of religion saying that it was incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul. Why then was there such a violent reaction?

Religion *per se* has been responsible for more wars than any other cause. A central feature of the Qur'an is that people will be judged by God on their actions. Islam is predicated upon the idea of responding to the call of God through action rather than mere theology. The reaction to the quote in the Muslim world was predictable, but it ignored the Pope's central message that faith and violence are incompatible.

The criticism, in the light of the Pope's sincere apology, is both unjust and ill-informed. Pope Benedict XVI seeks interfaith dialogue and justice for both Christians and Muslims. He seeks correction for past wrongs. These are worthy goals. May he be given the strength to continue. ■

Alarums and excursions

I have just taken part in a five day retreat along with fellow Redemptorists. I can see my readers nod their heads in approval. "That will be good for Humphrey O'Leary." Our retreat master stressed that the title of our institute said it all. We must take Redemption seriously. The Redeemer, the concrete expression of the love that God has for us, must be the centre of our lives of faith.

The message our retreat preacher had for us applies of course to all believers. Jesus our Saviour, the Father who sent him lovingly into the world, the Spirit that they have jointly gifted to us, are the very heart of what our religion is all about. All else is secondary.

This gave me reason to look back at the columns I have written in *Tui Motu* over past months. I have written about the unexpected restraint displayed by Joseph Ratzinger, hitherto God's rottweiler, during his first year as Pope. Also covered have been our moral obligation to counter global warming, and the more churchy issue of just what would constitute a satisfactory translation of the Latin text of the Mass into English. But how would I fare if I conducted a word count of those persons and matters which I have just been reminded are the essence of our Faith? How often have such words as Jesus, Redeemer, Saviour, God, Heavenly Father, appeared in the paragraphs I have written?

I fear that the count would be quite limited. The Pope, the Roman Curia, our New Zealand bishops, even the laity, have all been mentioned numerous times. But words referring to the beings and matters at the heart of our Faith have not figured prominently in my monthly pieces. What should I do? Confess the inadequacy of what I have written, turn my monthly pieces around, deal henceforth only with the core realities of Christianity?

In all honesty, I do not believe that is what I must do. There is a time and a place for directing our thoughts and reflections to the central elements of God's plan of salvation. The long-standing role of the Redemptorist order to which I belong was, in fact, to bring these realities alive in the heats and minds of the faithful, the tool employed successfully for many decades being the parish mission. These realities indeed must never be far from our thoughts and should be the basis of all else that we plot out and perform. But we have to move on from what is basic to more concrete and even transitory matters.

Benedict XVI has given us a lead in this. His first, and so far only, encyclical was on the love of God. But in expounding this elevated topic, he spoke first of human love, of eros, of the marital love of which some earlier Christian writers had been unwilling to express full approval. He moved on to point out the practical steps that believers should take to make love, and the justice it inspires, a practical reality across the world. There must be a loving Redeemer at the heart of it all. But there has to be concrete action if that love is to become a reality in the lives of the people of this planet.

I am happy to take my lead from Benedict. I will continue to raise for my readers consideration of what I believe to be important and, at times, debatable issues in Christian life. But always with the understanding that behind and within these issues is the reality that a loving and saving Redeemer has come into the world. ■

Fr Humphrey O'Leary is rector of the Redemptorist community in Glendowie, Auckland

Moment of truth

To be Christian is to be part of a strange movement. It is one that has re-birthed itself many times over the centuries. A movement that has argued and forgiven, healed and warred, given life and taken it. It was diverse from the start, twelve odd blokes and an unknown number of brave and often faceless women. Nothing has changed in that regard.

As I have stood on the stile these last eight months I have come to realise that the church's boundaries are more akin to semi-permeable membranes than fences. The concentration of different elements on the inside at any one time produces a flow of others both in and out of the container. It seems almost to have a rhythm of its own.

Listening to others over the last months has revealed a pattern of voices to this current flow, a shared recipe of questions whether they come from those leaving or those remaining. There is anger, pain, disillusionment and sometimes indifference from those leaving. And yet these are feelings often shared by those who remain.

Perhaps the most significant understanding I have come to for myself is that as a Christian you cannot 'leave' the church as such, you are simply more or less involved in the institution. It is not a polarizing either/or dilemma. Walk out those doors for the last time and you will still always be part of the family.

To have faith in Christ is to be Christian and our faith has very broad wings. Sometimes we are so far on the fringes that we are no longer seen by those at the heart. And yet the feathers of flight are found on those outer wings. Cut those and the bird cannot fly. Like it or not, it is not the conservative institutional core that keeps the church alive, it is the vagaries of the fringe, both liberal and fundamental, who keep the challenge and the questions evergreen.

And where is Christ? At the heart of the bird? The solid beating at the core of our church?

No. I believe Christ is every breath of air we navigate, the invisible current we steer, sometimes with us, sometimes in contradiction. Without the bird the feather floats in the same current. It may lack the power, speed or safety it knew before, but this loss of propelled direction leaves it responsive to the wind itself.

Have I made a decision? *Yes.*

Eve Adams